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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [EAID](#) [SOCI](#) [KPKO](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: ABYEI ROADMAP IMPLEMENTATION: DSRSG HAQ OUTLINES UN
EFFORTS/PLANS ON THE GROUND

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: On June 21, DSRSG for Humanitarian Affairs for told CDA that security is gradually being reestablished in Abyei as the JIU moves into position. The UN expects about half of the IDPs to begin to return immediately when they are told it is safe. UN priorities are to assist IDPs in their current locations, prepare for their return to Abyei, and prepare for continuing assistance and reconstruction efforts in the region. The DSRSG agreed that many of the existing irritants and flashpoints remain unresolved and the potential for renewed violence is high. END SUMMARY.

Security Slowly Returning to Abyei

¶2. (SBU) On June 21, Charge Fernandez discussed implementation of the Abyei Roadmap and the humanitarian situation there with Deputy Special Representative of the UNSYG (DSRSG) Ameerah Haq. CDA Fernandez was accompanied by EconOff and AIDOff. Ms. Haq said that deployment of the Joint Integrated Unit (JIU) to Abyei was proceeding relatively smoothly. (Note: On June 22, the UNMIS Force Commander told Emboffs that the JIU is now fully deployed. Following a ten day period of training, it is scheduled to take over security responsibilities by July 1, and both SAF (including the notorious 31st SAF Brigade) and SPLA units are to withdraw from the region. The UNMIS FC also said that UNMIS now is able to patrol outside the town without restrictions for the first time. End note.) In addition, UN demining engineers had arrived, confirming that both sides had laid mines during the May fighting. She related that the previous day, she had requested a map of the location of SPLA-laid mine fields from GoSS Minister of Presidential Affairs Luka Biong Deng, which he had promptly agreed to provide.

¶3. (SBU) The DSRSG said that GNU and GoSS are cooperating well on forming the Abyei police unit, with half to come from the north and half from the south. The GoSS had agreed that the new unit will be trained in Khartoum because it has better training facilities. Similarly, they had agreed to establish a regional humanitarian assistance agency (combining HAC and SSRG), which they also will staff on a 50-50 basis. Collection of the dead in Abyei town also has begun after securing permission from both sides.

Preparing for IDP Returns

¶4. (SBU) DSRSG Haq said that humanitarian relief for the IDPs in Agok, to which the majority had fled, is hampered by the total lack of infrastructure there and the fact that IDPs are dispersed. She noted that UN humanitarian workers in Agok have been sleeping in their vehicles. Therefore, now that security is being reestablished in Abyei, the UN plans to begin operating initially from the UNMIS camp there. (Note: Abyei is about 45 kms. from Agok. End note.) She added that the UN also is fully aware of the need not to neglect the 5000-7000 local Misseriya IDPs who fled north to Mulglad.

¶5. (SBU) With the return of security to Abyei, the UN expects IDPs to begin to return home, probably in greater numbers than originally

anticipated, possibly 50% of the total. UN forecasts had envisioned the initial return only of adult men, but surveys of the IDPs now indicate that many entire families plan to return as soon as possible. Ms. Haq noted that it is the women who traditionally construct the family shelters ("tukuls"), many of which had actually not been destroyed. Education is another major factor. The Sudanese school year already (on June 22) has begun and families are anxious to get their children in class. Therefore, the UN is making reconstruction of the rustic Abyei school system a priority.

GoSS Plans Town's Reconstruction

16. (SBU) DSRSG Haq said that in their previous meeting, GOSS Presidential Affairs Minister Luka Biong Deng outlined the GoSS's plans for Abyei's reconstruction once the interim administration is up and running. Luka told her that the SPLM plans to employ a town planning advisor to assist in reconfiguring Abyei town's layout, including relocating the town market, which was destroyed in the fighting and the looting and fire that followed. This would have to be done before the traders returned and occupied their previous locations in the market, he noted. The DSRSG said she had cautioned Luka not to delay the voluntary return of IDPs pending the reconfiguration of the town. Ms. Haq said she also had discouraged Deng from a proposal to construct housing for the returning IDPs using prefabricated structures and had encouraged the use of local materials instead. The CDA remarked that "a tukul is probably better than a prefab."

17. (SBU) CDA Fernandez noted that during his April visit to Abyei, he was told that many town residents then were in fact IDPs unable to continue on to their homes in outlying areas and stranded in the town. DSRSG Haq confirmed this, saying that the return of many

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earlier IDPs had been stalled by insecurity in their home areas, especially to the north of the town. Many of the current IDPs in Agok were in that situation and will return to it when they go back to Abyei.

18. (SBU) The DSRSG expressed concern at the SPLM's intention to limit full citizenship under the interim administration to long-term residents of Abyei. The DSRSG said she had pressed Luka on whether this would not favor Ngok Dinka at the expense of the Misseriya. He replied that the Misseriya "come and go" during the year and thus are not full-time residents of Abyei. The CDA commented that among the SPLM leadership, Luka always has pressed hardest for the most literal reading of the Abyei Protocol definition of "residents" as only "members of the Ngok Dinka community and other Sudanese residing in the area" (Para. 6.1 (a)). Luka's interpretation tends to marginalize the Misseriya as merely "other Sudanese" with no special ties to the region.

UN Humanitarian Priorities

19. (SBU) DSRSG Haq outlined the UN's three priorities on which she would brief the major donors at a meeting the following day. The most immediate priority is humanitarian assistance for the IDPs at their current locations in Agok, Muglad, and elsewhere. The second priority is to prepare for their return to Abyei by de-mining, and rebuilding the town's infrastructure, including electrical power, water and the market, which were destroyed, and perhaps assisting the interim administration with reconfiguring the town's layout. The third top priority is to reestablish the UN agencies that were diminished by looting and displaced by the conflict in order to continue and expand humanitarian and development assistance, and prevent future conflicts.

Potential Flashpoints Remain

10. (SBU) AIDOff noted that Misseriya militia had looted the town following the inhabitants' flight and had vandalized anything they could not carry off. The town's brand new USAID-funded power station, for example, had been deliberately burned. When IDPs return to find this destruction, it will further stoke Dinka bitterness at the Misseriya in general. He noted the danger that the Ngok Dinka may respond by seeking to use this current situation

as an opportunity to keep ethnic Misseriya with local ties from returning. If the Dinka do respond by blocking Misseriya returnees, he commented, it will tend to marginalize moderate Misseriya leaders and drive the majority of Misseriya toward extremists, such as Mohammed Al Ansari.

¶11. (SBU) AIDOff also noted that the UN Regional Coordinators office has reported that most potential returnees want to go straight to their villages, rather than Abyei town. Ms. Haq agreed that this will create more potential flashpoints in the areas north of the town. This is the area where Ngok Dinka farmers and Misseriya herdsman are in closest contact and where a clash is most likely to occur. (Note: The recent round of fighting was sparked initially by a clash north of the town on May 13. End note.)

Comment

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¶12. (SBU) The Abyei roadmap's most basic and most concrete building blocks - security and humanitarian relief - appear to be very gradually getting in place on the ground. However, the more problematic political aspects, such as forming the new interim administration, are taking longer. Post will report separately on the latest developments in NCP-SPLM negotiations in Juba, which have focused primarily on the arbitration mechanism for the ABC report. Even when all of the roadmap components are in place, many of the underlining sources of conflict will remain and threaten to explode again unless carefully managed. It is actually in both parties financial interests to contain the conflict, but as many of our contacts have noted in the last two weeks, there is no logic to conflict.

FERNANDEZ